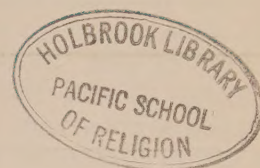




The South India CHURCHMAN

The Magazine of the Church of South India

● FEBRUARY 1978



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BUSINESS MANAGER'S NOTICE

Rates of subscription per annum : In India Rs. 6.00. In England £1. In U.S.A. \$2.50. Foreign subscription paid in India Rs. 9. Single copy 65 P. (Bank Commission of Re. 1. to be added on all mofussil cheques.)

Honorary (and ex-officio) Business Manager : Mrs. D. L. Gopal Ratnam, M.A. All remittances and communications about new subscriptions, discontinuance of subscriptions, advertisements and changes of address should be sent to the Business Manager, South India Churchman, Synod Office, P.O. 4906, Cathedral, Madras-600 086. Telephone : 811266.

Honorary Agent in the United Kingdom : Mrs. Elton, The Rectory, Itteringham, Norfolk, Nor. 17y.

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Sixteenth Synod

'A sad and an uninspiring Synod' was the impression shared by almost all the delegates and observers of the Sixteenth Synod Sessions of the Church of South India. The sadness was understandable as the delegates were shocked beyond words when they received the news of the demise of Mrs. Flora Samuel, the wife of the Moderator. However, there was an underlying sense of frustration almost throughout the Synod Sessions. It is regrettable that there was so much of anger and unpleasantness. The Church as a whole must question and analyse the reasons why the sessions were so unproductive. Time must be spent on reflection and efforts must be made to remove as far as possible the misunderstandings and the unhappiness of the representatives from the dioceses. It is imperative that we are open with one another, charitable and learn not only to listen but to appreciate the view-points of the others. This is indeed a sad commentary on the affairs of the Church after 30 years of its existence. It is hoped that at every level the members will wake up and face squarely the question 'What is wrong with our Church?'

There was a genuine desire and indeed rightly so for the reports of all the Committees and Commissions to be sent to the delegates well ahead of time. This would have provided an opportunity for the delegates to adequately prepare themselves to participate effectively in the Sessions and would have also saved time. Secondly, more than at any other time the restrictions due to the language problem came to the fore and there was greater participation. It is good that a resolution was passed for facilitating the delegates to speak in their own languages in the coming Synods. This must be encouraged at the diocesan level also. Thirdly, the gap between the dioceses and the Synod seems to have become wider. Efforts must be made to bridge this gap. The delegates approved the proposal to increase the diocesan assessment from 3/4% of the total income to 1%. Along with this, we hope that members would feel that they belong to a larger Church of which the Synod is the highest body.

It is essential for the officers of the Synod to regularly visit the dioceses. Particularly, at the time of diocesan councils, invitations must be given to the officers and at least one of them must make it a point to participate. At least one session must be arranged at the time of Diocesan Councils for talking over and discussing the activities of the Synod and for sharing the plans and



programmes of the Church at the Synod level. Such occasions are essential and one hopes that they will be encouraged and followed up in the coming years. We must seek other ways of communication also. The objective should be to make every member aware of the total programmes and activities of the church. Important resolutions and decisions taken at the Working Committee and the Executive Committee of the Synod Sessions should be communicated through the *South India Churchman*. All the bishops of the dioceses are expected to know of them. They in turn could easily avail themselves of their monthly letters or the diocesan magazines to share these informations with the members at large. Lack of information as well as misinformation have resulted in indifference and an inadequate knowledge of the state of the Church.

Scintillating and thought-provoking addresses by Dr. Emilio Castro and Mr. Sathyasatchy were heard with rapt attention and appreciated by all the delegates. For the first time in the history of the Church of South India, a Christian pastor from South America has addressed the Synod. It is earnestly desired that this will be followed by visits from leaders of the churches in the so-called Third World.

Three main subjects were referred back to the dioceses for continued study. The first was the report of the Special Committee appointed to study the life and work of the Church of South India during the last 30 years. The second was the address of Prof. Sathyasatchy. The third was the question of women's ordination. These are important matters vitally concerning the life of the Church and its future. Here is a unique opportunity, which we hope the churches will make use of, to study such matters at the grassroot level.

We hope that the local parishes and the dioceses will be fully involved in these studies. These should provide opportunities for the participation of all the members and for the Spirit to open up new ways of reconciliation and a new vision for the Church of South India for the decades ahead.

Evangelism and renewal in the Power of the Holy Spirit

Introduction

The words evangelism, renewal, and the power of the Holy Spirit belong to the same register. They are so closely woven into the tapestry of the faith and life of the Church that they cannot be put apart in separate compartments without loss in their content.

It gives all of us a feeling of gladness, a reason to rejoice, to know that a newly awakened 'apostolic consciousness' is in evidence. The Churches in India begin to examine themselves in the light of the great commission of our Lord, 'Go forth to every part of the world and proclaim the good news to the whole creation'. God is breathing His Spirit in a new way in new areas.

The Divide

At this point itself I would, staking my cordial relationship I have with some of the good children of God, like to strike a note of warning in respect of a deadly divide that shows itself up in the contemporary Christian world. I fear the divide has already staged its appearance in India under the veil of evangelism and renewal. This kind of a veiled entry of the divide will spell disaster to the cause of evangelism in this country. My reference here is to the notion of Christians being classified as, or Christians classifying themselves as, the ecumenicals and the evangelicals, a bewildering divide which confuses and confounds innocent people—Christians as well as non-Christians. The saints who belong to one body, one Spirit, one hope, one Lord and one God and Father are revelling in raising walls of differences at a time when India, whose people are tired of divisions and differences, is impatiently waiting to see one undivided Christ presented. We cannot separate ecumenism and evangelism. Christ has brought us together in Him so that the world may come to know that He was sent by God (St. John 17: 21-22). The concern of the Church is ecumenism and not ecumenicalism; evangelism and not evangelicalism. Unless and until an average Indian comes to know and recognize that the various Christian denominations in India are not opposing groups hoisting their banners of pride but that they belong to one fellowship of one Holy Spirit under the bond of the love of God as revealed in Jesus Christ, our talk of evangelism and our proclamation of the Good News will be a mockery. I am not against a deeper study and understanding of ecumenicalism and evangelicalism as stages and states in Christian experience and action. But I register my protest against the name-boards.

Evangelism

Unprecedented gales have hit South India leaving trails of death and destruction. Several lakhs of acres of yielding lands in Tiruchi and Thanjavur districts and in Andhra Pradesh are to-day stinking vastnesses of dead men and animals; celebrated granaries are reduced to stretches of sheer marsh.

What is evangelism in this context?

Diviseema, a group of islets of beauty and fertility at the mouth of River Krishna, is a scene of utter destruction. When the newspaper men reached the islets they saw dazed survivors walk on the dead bodies of their kith and kin like moving shadows. With faces wreathed in agony they raised their hands heavenwards and cried, 'We do not know what great sin we have committed for this curse to come upon us'. This is the cry of the soul of India in times of calamities.

What is the function of the evangelist (the Christian) when calamities strike people?

St. Paul in The Ship

The ship in which St. Paul was being taken to Rome as a prisoner was struck by a fierce wind. Hopes of the voyagers getting through alive began to fade. Here was a fine opportunity for the evangelist to preach about sin and salvation and prepare his co-passengers for the life after death. He could have, without much difficulty, given them an emergency baptism, for the sea itself was doing the sprinkling and the immersing! But instead of preaching he moved into action in the midst of a thoroughly hopeless situation. Thus the evangelist was the only person there in the entire company to prove himself equal to the challenge.

Dr. Billy Graham in 'The Ship'

The most beautiful part of Dr. Billy Graham's recent Good News Festival in Madras was his personal visit to the parts of Andhra Pradesh where the havoc was severe. Mother Theresa's visit to the places of calamity expressed the concern of the Church for the people in distress. We know how the various Churches in the country acting 'ecumenically' and in co-operation with other service agencies rushed help to the people and how they are still engaged in works of rehabilitation.

No one can deny or forget the tremendous amount of service that the Christian Churches have given to this land of ours in the fields of education, health, healing, etc. We know as to what extent Christianity had its influence on the life of Mahatma Gandhi and of the other leaders. A Christian may like to detect elements of rivalry in Hindu religious institutions showing active interest in the area of human development. But one must be really happy and thank God for the rivalry, for it is in a good area, doing good to people. We cannot be pharisaical about their intentions. Although we, as a baptized community, have done some substantial work in reclaiming man in this country of ours, we cannot be, rather we should not be, claiming monopoly in this area, particularly these days when there are, besides the Government, many religious and non-religious service agencies honestly working on the spot.

Eventually, this situation should also warn us not to be working too much on the concept of 'social gospel', if it ignores the fact that the baptized community has no justification for its existence as a Church without the verbal proclamation of the Good News. It is given to no one except the baptized community in this country to proclaim to this nation that there was a Man who died on the cross and rose from the dead and that 'there is no salvation in anyone else at all for there is no other name under heaven granted to men, by which we may receive salvation,' (Acts 4:12 NEB). This salvation is for the whole man and not for a fraction of the man. Hence do we call for a balanced understanding and action without allowing any lopsidedness in the witnessing life of the Church.

The Covenant

There is no work in the world, secular or otherwise, which offers an easy-going life. Particularly, a Christian, as he goes into the world, takes with him his baptism and eucharist. The baptism and the eucharist are not religious rites left behind in the Church in the safe custody of the presbyter. They are transferred and transmitted into the world along with the person who receives them. For a believer his secular work itself gets transformed into something of a sacramental value, a value that links his worldly work to eternal values. However small or insignificant it may be, he feels a tremendous responsibility towards his work and is willing to take upon himself suffering and sacrifices. This is more so with the preaching of the Gospel. I would say that it is in this sphere of ministry that a person's baptism into the death of Christ becomes incredibly real to him to the extent of rebuke, assault, suffering and even death. This is the meaning of what has happened to our beloved and respected Moderator and his family. The world is doing the same thing to the Lord and His servants. 'They have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb (Rev. 7:14)'. It is to be shaped into this likeness of the Son of God that we were fore-ordained (Rom. 8:29-30). The Holy Spirit is breathed through the wounds of Jesus Christ, and the power strikes when the wounds become manifest (John 20:20, 22).

A word about the 'salvation of souls'. This expression which many of us in our enthusiasm would like to use as a mark of pietistic approach to evangelism may belong to the vocabulary of, but not to the spirit of, the New Testament. The soul being saved or released may be all right for those who regard the body as a prison. The body is to them the product of deeds good and bad, a symbol of man's bondage to Fate. Hence the necessity for the release or liberation of the soul from the body. This is not Christianity. Jesus Christ is not a soul. He is a Man. He is the Son of God who had become a man once and for all as the Redeemer of man.

Avatar

There is another difficulty for the layman to catch the point and to grasp the wisdom of the learned when they refer to Jesus Christ as 'Avatar'. To add the definite article 'the' to Avatar does not seem to make much difference. Jesus has not come here as a 'Maya-Kiristhu'; he has not come here looking like a man; he has come not to perform a particular task in a given period and then go back to get submerged into the oneness of the godhead; God the Father has given away His son to man, sent him to be born as a man, as *the* Man. St. John giving much thought to this aspect of Christ's coming into the world as a man, and wanting to silence the notions of gnosticism about Christ deliberately dropped the word 'anthropos' (man) and declared 'The word became *sarx* (flesh)'. Some of the translators of the Bible do not seem to take note of this aspect and they proceed to translate (rather to interpret) the Greek word 'sarax' as 'man'. This may not create any misgiving in the west. But for India this is a dangerous translation and will lead to classifying Christ as an Avatar which is against the truth.

Indigenization

Mistaken notions about indigenization are making inroads into the life and faith of the Church in India. Indigenization is not something that has got to be brought in. It has to spring from within. To be indigenous is to be spontaneously in tune with one's own culture. This does not mean that you get mixed up with concepts and practices that do not go well with the content of your faith. Christian faith is not the product of culture; not controlled by somebody's culture. Culture is the produce of man's own intelligence encountering with his own environment. The function of the culture of a people is not to control or subdue the faith of its people but it is to serve as a channel of communication. It is here that the Indian Church is in a sad situation. The discovery or the rediscovery of our cultural identity only will make our evangelism meaningful and relevant.

The English Language and the Western culture have been hindrances in this country for the Church to be indigenous and evangelistic. A non-English knowing person in India can become the head of a Hindu mutt,

or the Chief Minister of a State, or even the Prime Minister. But he can never hope to become an ordinary member of a small committee in the Diocese. It is not my intention to belittle the importance and the usefulness of English. I only wish to point out that we have drifted far away from the place where we ought to be, perhaps to the point of no-return.

Creative Writing

We have missed the bus in the fields of literature and fine arts. To mention only a few among the children of the soil, H. A. Krishna Pillai (Tamil), Kattakayam Cherian Mapila (Malayalam), Padmashri Gurram Joshua (Telugu), Chennappa Uthangi (Kannada) are accepted and acclaimed as creative writers whom the people know also as Christians transmitting Gospel truths. We thank God for them and for the others who are in the field. But the present position is that we are far behind in number and quality. We have to catch up and even overtake, not in vanity and pride, but in love and humanity for the sake of the preaching of the Gospel.

Maha Kavi H. A. Krishna Pillai, a Christian, one of the most outstanding Tamil poets of the 19th century, the 150th anniversary of whose birth was recently celebrated in many places in Tamil Nadu, is the author of *Rakshanya Yathrikam*, a magnificent work of Tamil poetry. The work which is very much appreciated and studied today by quite a few scholars and others reveals the extraordinary depth of the poet's Christian experience, his devotion and love for Christ and his insight into the truth of the Gospel.

Christ of India

Our people want a Christ who belongs to India. In one of the forums of Tamil poets, a well-known Saivite Scholar stood up and said, 'If you would present Christ in this manner we would have no hesitation in accepting Him'. When Mahatma Gandhi was on a crucial fasting, Rajaji could only recall Christ's agony in Gethsemane. It is the talk of the people that Sri Sankaracharya of Kanchi Kamakotipeetam now in retirement, the Jagadguru for the crores and crores of Hindus, smiles like Jesus. These are but tiny windows into the deepest regions of the mind of India. We have to speak to this mind, enter into a purposeful dialogue with this mind. But the Church, instead of being a force of evangelism, appears to be the field for evangelism.

Revolution

More than renewal, we need revolution in the Church, a mighty change in the hearts of people and an honest selfless rethinking on the structure of the Church. We need a revolution in the concepts and in the administering of the baptism and the Eucharist. The purpose and function of the laity and clergy needs to be restated, not reiterated. At the congregational level, the notion that the laity should not get into the barricaded 'holy place' in the church still persists. Alas! Where is the sanctum, the holy of holies, in the place of Christian worship? I have discovered to my dismay that it is the laity—fairly a big section of the laity—that refuses to get out of the cell. Is it not the privilege of the clergy to honestly and boldly try to wipe out this

kind of untouchability in the house of God? The concept of 'clergy and laity' should be transformed into 'clergy in laity'. I Peter 2:9 wherein is couched the privilege of the believers as belonging to the 'Royal Priesthood' should be brought out of cold storage and a bold and honest interpretation of the clause should be made available. The talk of the dearth of 'Ordained Ministers' should stop. The 'prohitism' in the Church should go, yielding place to a dynamic and relevant 'Ordained Ministry'. The Holy Spirit is given to us to proclaim the Good News. It is to emphasize the imperativeness of the verbal proclamation that the Spirit had come down on the Church in the form of 'tongues like flames of fire'. If at all the Church should be structured it should be structured primarily for evangelism, for Gospel action.

We cannot afford to say, as some seem to say, that the days of conversions are over. Nor can we be satisfied with a ten people here and a hundred people there accepting Jesus through baptism. We have to aim at the entire nation looking up to Jesus. God can and will do this not in the fashion of our own imaginations but according to His own plan. The question is whether we are willing to be partners with Him in His redemptive act. It may cost us our traditions, our concepts, our structures so dear to us.

Stop-Look-Go

There is a craziness among us to move heaven and earth to raise huge sums of money for the sake of building big Churches and lofty towers. The name-boards of our worshipping places have no relevance to the need of the Society. They convey nothing to the Society. Be it in a town or in a remote village, it is invariably in English! Ridiculous!

Diocese, Pastorate, Presbyter, Bishop, Reverend, The Rt. Reverend: What is the good news that these words carry with them for India? Pastorate. A very good name for a people who need to be taken care of and protected as sheep. The name does not suggest any functional value in relation to the mission of the Church. I understand from the dynamic paper presented by Rev. M. Mackenzie at the recent retreat for the clergy of the Diocese of Madras that the word Presbyter simply means 'an old man', and that the word Bishop has no live meaning and that it does not convey the original Greek meaning of a shepherd or overseer.

Way In?

A stumbling block for the people of India to accept Jesus as their Lord is the wrong concept of baptism as an entry into a new caste or into a multi-caste society. We do acknowledge that in baptism we are engrafted into the body of Christ, that we are buried with Christ, and that by faith we are raised with Him (Rom. 6:3, 4; Col. 2:12). We are joined to Christ so that we should go with Him out into the world. Baptism is not the way in, it is the way out. This is a truth connected with the Gospel action of the Church. This should enable the Christian and the non-Christian to get out of the prison-cell of the past and go free into the open world to be servants of the Servant-Lord. Baptism

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[FEBRUARY 1978]

Responsibilities of Leadership

The name given to me in baptism means 'leader'. It was only a few years ago I discovered this. On checking with my mother I found that she was not aware of it. I now find myself in a position of leadership but am very much aware of the limitations within which I try to live up to my name.

We say of some people that they are 'born leaders'. It certainly seems that some have this gift of leadership. I call it a 'gift' because they have this quality long before they knew anything about the mechanics of leadership. We see it in very small children. Put a group of children together and one of them will play the role of leadership quite naturally. We look for this quality in some of the practical tests given to candidates for the ministry. If we do not have too much of the natural gift, then we need to double our efforts to cultivate the qualities called for. There are at least six responsibilities of leadership.

(a) To Serve

Leaders are not masters. When we become leaders we may err by going to either of two extremes.

On the one hand by becoming dictators. We expect everyone under our authority to instantly obey our commands—whether they are right or wrong. We do not expect those subject to us to argue with our orders. This may be all right for the army where men are regimented and taught only to obey, rather than think for themselves. Their life depends on instantaneous united response to command. This will not do for other spheres of life and certainly not for the Church. We are not regimenting people but seeking to develop people. This does not mean a free-for-all and there needs to be discipline, which I will come to a little later.

On the other hand we may err by yielding to pressures. I hardly need to elaborate this. We all face them daily. But here again there is a delicate balance to be achieved. We must listen to advice—but to be taken when it is given objectively. Not just to please people. If we try to please everybody, we will please none—not even ourselves. Leaders are not dictators on the one hand, or weaklings on the other. They are servants—in the biblical sense. A Presbyter is the servant of the Pastorate Committee, but the Pastorate Committee is not his master. He has only one Master. We are to serve the people by shouldering burdens. 'Some day there will be a king who rules with integrity, and national leaders who govern with justice. Each of them will be like a shelter from the wind and a place to hide from storms' —(Isaiah 32 : 1-2).

So keep watch over yourselves and over all the flock which the Holy Spirit has placed under your care. Be shepherds of the Church of God (Acts 20: 28).

(b) To Initiate

Another temptation of those in positions of leadership is to do the whole job themselves. This is sometimes the easiest way, but is it the right way? What is really achieved? If the people are not involved they will not carry on the work. Many a project has collapsed the moment the leader leaves the place. May be they even look at such situations with an ill conceived pride—they can't manage without me! If the work collapses after you have left the scene, then your leadership was defective. Everything should not be in the hands of one man. Our real success in leadership will be when we can initiate things without people realising it. Or if they did, we were so successful in passing it on to collective leadership that none remembers how it began. This calls for a real spirit of humility. The natural instinct is to want to be recognised for all that we do. Look not for the reward on earth, but the greater reward in heaven. Let us not save ourselves or gain a reputation for ourselves at the cost of losing all the permanent work we could have left behind.

'But if anyone's work is burnt up, then he will lose it, but he himself will be saved, as if he had escaped through the fire' (1 Corinthians 3: 15).

(c) To Guide

A leader has to show the way. At this point we must take the pre-requisite, that he knows the way, for granted. The twenty-third psalm is the classical example of this. The Shepherd leads the sheep. He does not drive them. He does not send them where he will not go. He goes ahead and they follow.

'He guides me in the right paths, as he has promised' (Psalm 23 : 3)

A successful commander will be in the battlefield with his men—not in the operation room behind the lines keeping himself safe. Take a topical illustration from a film currently showing in Bangalore. (This is not intended to divert you to the cinema.) The cockpit of the aircraft is damaged and both pilots killed by a collision. At first, instructions by a pilot in another aircraft flying alongside are given to a stewardess. She is told in detail every move she has to make to land the aircraft. It doesn't work. An experienced pilot has to risk his life to get into the damaged aircraft in order to land it safely. A leader as a guide had to be in the dangerous position. In the thick of the battle. He cannot always stay in the protective confines of his pulpit, giving the orders.

(d) To Train

The task before us to make known the love of Christ to all mankind needs a great army of workers. Leaders must train others.

'Take the teaching that you heard me proclaim in the presence of many witnesses, and entrust them to reliable people, who will be able to teach others also' (2 Timothy 2 : 2).

We have been trying to take training seriously in the Diocese, but we must step up our efforts. This will be

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Shalom Gardens: Bishop Gnanadhasan Home for the Aged, Thirunagar, Madurai

The foundation stone for a Home for the Aged was laid on 5th October, 1977, by the Moderator of the Church of South India, the Most Rev. Ananda Rao Samuel, in the presence of the Bishop of Madurai-Ramnad Diocese, the Rt. Rev. George Devadoss and Mrs. Joy Gnanadhasan, the wife of the former moderator.

Bishop Gnanadhasan used to share with friends his concern for the old people often. He believed that the Church has not done enough or, indeed, totally neglected the old people. He also felt that the church, instead of just continuing the earlier forms of ministries like schools, hospitals, hostels, orphanages, etc., should also initiate pioneering ministries in new areas of need. In the traditional Indian home the care of the old has been the responsibility of the children. Though the situation has not been a happy one—the old were at best fed, in return for odd jobs they did,—it was a tolerable situation. With the changing pattern of the family in India, and children moving out of native villages or towns to other places, often parents have to be left behind with no one to look after them. Further, many parents would like to continue their own independent lives without being a burden to the children, and enabling themselves to have fuller lives, pursuing their own interests. Bishop Gnanadhasan had identified this need and had a particular burden for those old people who did not have any one to look after them, particularly, for those who have been in the service of the church. He raised some money and left this in the Kanyakumari diocese for this purpose. He wanted to build a home in which retired pastors and catechists and others could live.

Some of the friends in Madurai had separately felt this need. They were disturbed to see many persons who had lived a life of usefulness to society, become literally unwanted and uncared citizens in their old age, but who definitely deserve a better deal. Retired persons from the middle class of the low income group have often only a pension or income of about Rs. 100. They find it difficult to run a house-hold, keep a servant, pay for medical care, etc. within this income. In some cases, their situation is worse than that of beggars, as they choose to starve or suffer, rather than to be at the mercy of others. Others who have enough to support themselves, dread the idea of becoming dependent on friends or relatives when in old age their health fails. It is this group whom we hope to serve through this Home.

In Madurai, under the initiative of the Tamilnadu Theological Seminary, the Inba Illam has been started, a home for destitutes with the support of many friends in Madurai and Dusseldorf, Germany, the bishop having kindly allowed the use of a former hostel in Pasumalai for this purpose. It was one of the original ideas to

have different groups of people in the Inba Illam. But, this became in practice impossible. A second home with greater facilities not so much physical as intellectual became necessary.

So, a group of friends, got together under the leadership of Miss M. Devaraj, former headmistress of the O.C.P.M. High School, and started working on the idea of a second Home. The choice fell on Thirunagar because Thirunagar is famous for its healthy air and the land there was offered by a friend at a reduced rate. The site itself with the *Kanmai* around, and water in it for good six months of the year, is an ideal place with open space all around, with no possibility of any buildings coming up on the three sides. The nearby YWCA Health Centre and the Grace Church, CSI Thirunagar, situated close by are added attractions. It was also felt that a Home to the memory of the late Moderator would be fitting, somewhere near the centre of Tamilnadu.

Shalom Gardens is the name chosen for the home. Shalom means peace, harmony and welfare. Retired people want peace and quiet and we hope that they can enjoy it here. The architect Mr. L. W. Baker has planned the building to be not like a hostel but a home with gardens in the front and behind the rooms. He has designed the rooms so that every room has a lake frontage. He has planned even an open air uncles' and aunties' tea corner near the fishpond, which Mr. Carr, who is voluntarily helping to organize the home, has provided, so that the old people can sit around, and chat and fish. In the garden, in the campus and in the fields around, inmates can take long walks.

It is proposed to provide facilities in the Home similar to what retired persons in middle class homes need to make life enjoyable and meaningful. The rooms provide for a sitting corner, dressing corner and store, bathroom, bedroom, verandah in the front for chit-chat with neighbours and verandah at the back for sitting out more privately. Each room is provided with a tea kitchen.

Meals will be common with provisions for some variety. There will be facilities for reading books, playing indoor games, listening to music, health care and variety entertainment. We also hope that some means can be arranged so that the old people can continue to be of service to society,—like taking tuitions for children in the neighbourhood, organizing meetings for older citizens, village development projects. They will manage their own affairs, normally pay for their food, and if they can afford, for all their expenses.

All the needed resources for the buildings have not been found yet. Friends have made money available for the development and planning. The Diakonaal Bureau of the Reformed Church in Holland has promised to help. Like all Christian ventures, this is a venture of faith and we believe that the Lord will provide. The 'Helpage International' is planning to arrange sponsored walks for school children in Madurai to raise some money for this home as well as the home planned by the sisters of St. Charles in Thirunagar. We hope that friends all over South India would support the building up of the home. Each double room costs about Rs. 10,000 and if anyone who contributes for a room it can be named after the memory of the person to be remembered. We also invite friends to join this association which is a registered society, by paying Rs. 25 as annual membership fee. We request your prayers for the speedy completion of the home.

It is hoped that the home would be ready for occupation by the end of the year. Old people may apply for reservations of rooms to the Secretary.

Arasaradi,
Madurai.

LILY AMIRTHAM

Evangelism and renewal—(Continued from page 4)

should not draw people into a static establishment and Eucharist should not hold them there.

We speak of 'established churches'. The verb 'establish' occurs 11 times in the N. T. Nowhere does it refer to the establishment of the church as a rigid organisation. Acts 16:15 is the only place where the Greek word 'stereo' (translated 'established') is used. What is referred to here is only the establishment in faith. 'Establishment' does not contain within itself the concept of movement. It does not move out. It gives you the idea of protection and not of action. 'The picture of the church cannot be a true picture unless it is a motion picture,'—Lesslie Newbigin.

Satyameva Jayate!

Christianity is said to be a historical religion. It is historical not just because Jesus Christ lived in this world in a particular period known to history, not even because the history of the world is divided into two, as B. C. and A. D., but it is because Jesus is history. By this I mean that the history of the world should be understood and interpreted in terms of the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. 'There is no other source of revelation once we have known Christ' (Newbigin in 'The Finality of Christ'). The life of Christ, past, present and future. His life is the only hope of the world. The motto of our nation 'Satyameva Jayate', which runs like a cord through the legends, epics, puranas as well as the modern poetry and novels and short stories, finds its full and final expression in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. This is very vital to the understanding and preaching of the Gospel in India.

P. A. SATHIASATCHY

(Extracts from a talk given at the 16th Synod of the Church of South India in Kottayam in January 1978.)

Responsibilities of Leadership—(Continued from page 5)

an important aspect in our quest for Spiritual Renewal. I am glad that the Sunday School Committee has resolved to put all its resources and energies into the training of Sunday School Teachers. I exhort all Pastors to give emphasis to the training of the laity and give the laity opportunity to exercise their ministry in the church and witness in the world. Likewise, heads of Institutions must give emphasis to the training of their staff to take on more responsibility. This aspect of our leadership can produce results beyond our comprehension.

(e) To Resolve Disputes

May be if we were more effective in the other aspects of our leadership this area would be less. However, we are in an imperfect world and disputes there will be. While they exist, the leader has to resolve them. Happily we are a Diocese where we do not have too many. But let us not be complacent. If we do not deal effectively with disputes at all levels they will grow. Here again comes the question of delegation. All disputes in a Diocese cannot be solved by the Bishop! Neither should he attempt to do so.

'But in addition, you should choose some capable men and appoint them as leaders of the people; leaders of thousands, hundreds, fifties, and tens. They must be God-fearing men, who can be trusted and who cannot be bribed. Let them serve as judges for the people on a permanent basis. They can bring all the difficult cases to you, but they themselves can decide all the smaller disputes. That will make it easier for you, as they share your burden' (Exodus 18: 21-22).

(f) To Discipline

Earlier we said that although leaders are not to be dictators this does not mean a free-for-all. Being under Grace and not under Law is not a licence to do as we please. We need discipline in the Church and leaders have to exercise the use of discipline. This will not be exercised from a standpoint of judgement and condemnation. The purpose will not be to punish but to correct. Our God is a God of Love but also of Righteousness. We have our rules of discipline in the Diocese based on this conception. Excommunication is a very hard thing to do but it has to be done sometimes for the sake of the Body of Christ. Discipline when exercised by a leader may make him temporarily unpopular but he must be fearless when occasion demands it. A leader will not listen to accusations falsely brought and which cannot be substantiated. Sometimes the accuser is the one who needs to be disciplined.

'Do not listen to an accusation against an elder unless it is brought by two or more witnesses. Rebuke publicly all those who commit sins, so that the rest may be afraid' (I Timothy 5: 19, 20).

(All quotations are from the Good News Bible.)

K. E. GILL,
Bishop,

What The World Sees

There was a small column in the newspapers reporting a shocking incident. According to the report, an important leader of the Christian Church and his wife were admitted into a hospital with severe burn injuries. Some unidentified persons had thrown petrol on their car and on their persons and had set fire to them. Later, the lady succumbed to the injuries. It was suspected that the incident had been motivated by politics and corruption in the church. Obviously the heinous crime had been planned and financed by some vengeful and malicious 'Christians'.

An old and prestigious educational institution has been closed down due to some litigation in the civil court between one of the staff members, a Christian, and a Church leader who is supposed to be the head of the administrative hierarchy. About 1,500 students, including 300 students in the final year, are losing precious days of education. In spite of the desperate appeals of the anxious parents and the students themselves, both the contesting parties in the case refuse to give in, being too engrossed in their colossal selfishness to remember the real purpose of the existence of the institution.

There is this group of 'Christian' men, full of burning hatred and frustrated ambitions, planning and discussing the next 'move' in the dirty game of politics—not secular politics but 'Church Politics' which is more popular among 'Christians' today. These men are totally negative in their ideas and attitudes, bent on destroying the present structure, which they feel is an unjust one. But they would be taken aback and surprised if you ask them if they have even the vaguest notion of a new and better one. Neither are they sincere or fit enough to build it. At the moment, they seem helpless before the formidable power of their enemy. One of them mutters dejectedly, 'He has to be "finished"'. There is no other way'. Another 'Christian' has a peculiar and lethal idea to offer. 'There, you have the subtlest and the most dangerous weapon in your hand to destroy your enemy.' Apparently this creature thinks he is a brilliant strategist. The funny part of this gruesome story is that these people believe, or pretend to believe, that they are fighting evil and injustice.

He is a very old man, probably more than eighty, but he seems to be delighted to have the young visitors. The old man recalls past days, younger days, and some pleasant and wistful remembrances follow. Suddenly he fires a question at his visitors: 'Did you hear of my calamities?' They nod uncomfortably. His only child, a daughter, young, newly married and with a brilliant and promising career ahead, had been cruelly crippled in a motor accident. But the visitors did not expect what followed the question. 'God has always been good

to me.' Some more uncomfortable nods. Then the old and faithful Christian continues, 'You know, I had a wonderful vision of India as the Cruciform of Christ. The Himalayas can be called the Rock of Ages... the Kanyakumari the Chaste Bride of Christ. Our rich Indian culture and literature contain in them the truths of the Gospel pre-visualised centuries ago... We, Indian Christians, are the apostles of Christ, with a tremendous responsibility towards our Western brethren. We have the key to their problems and confusions. How I wish the Indian Christians would realise this!' He goes on with youthful and sincere enthusiasm, with longing in his eyes and conviction in his voice. The visitors leave him wondering how he could think of the world and his Christian responsibility towards it when he could easily have been crushed by the blow that fate had dealt him.

The old lady in the wheel chair narrates her story in a dispassionate voice. A dedicated student under Dr. Ida Scudder, she resolved to make 'Service and Sacrifice' the motto of her life. In the fifty years of her service as a doctor, she says, the highest amount by way of remuneration that she reached was Rs. 200 (The lowest amount of salary was Rs. 24!) Now struck by paralysis and feeble at the age of eighty-three, she lifts up, very slightly, her useless left hand and says, 'God has allowed me the use of my right hand. I do not know yet the purpose for which he has preserved me so long...' There is such wonder and thankfulness in her voice.

There are Christians and Christians. The question is, what kind of Christians attract the attention of the millions of non-Christians in our respective situations? Does the quiet, perfectly Christian way of life that one comes across in some insignificant home have any impact on at least the immediate neighbourhood? How do the non-Christians view and evaluate those Christians who stand on the prominent public platforms, claiming to represent Christianity or its organised institution? Is the Christian way of life meant only for octogenarians?

Nowadays it seems as if Christians, clergy or laymen, are too busy looking for the dust in each other's eyes, instead of doing something about the beam each carries about in his own eyes. This renders it impossible for them to stop and look at the world around them needing them, now only mocking them.

From a detached point of view, the Christian world is a rather ridiculous sight. With all its insincerity, corruption, jealousy, selfishness, power-madness and hatred, its busy-body, interfering activities and its 'services' to humanity present a lopsided and incongruous picture. D. H. Lawrence's words, though found in another context, explain our situation aptly: 'We are bewildered, dazed. In the name of brotherly love, we rush into stupendous blind activities of brotherly hate'.

We are desperately in need of setting our little world in order, of reaffirming the original purpose for which we are created. It is high time that we ceased to be selfish clowns, making Christianity a mere superfluous appendage. Or else, one day, the World, like an irritated parent, whose patience has snapped at last, is going to turn around and say, 'Stop all your nonsense and behave yourself'. Woe unto Christians when such a day dawns!

ROHINI CHARLES.

[FEBRUARY 1978]

Message Given By Dr. L. B. M. Joseph, Director and Professor of Surgery, at the Funeral Service of Mrs. Flora Samuel, C.M.C. Hospital Chapel, Vellore, January 16th 1978

I have been asked to say a few words about my friend Mrs. Flora Samuel, the wife of a dear friend of mine, the Rt. Rev. Ananda Rao Samuel, Bishop of the Diocese of West Godavari and Krishna, and Moderator of the Church of South India.

I find it very difficult to say anything because of the deep sorrow in my mind and in the minds of the members of my family at this tragic moment.

I can only inadequately express my anguish, my sorrow and my deepest feelings of sympathy to Ananda Rao, to Lucy, to Paul, to Solomon and to all the other members of their family.

I have known Bishop Ananda Rao Samuel since my school days, we were playmates, we were friends and this friendship with him and with the members of his family has endured and become deeper in four decades.

I have known Flora from the time of her marriage to Ananda Rao. I have known her as a friend and also as my patient. I operated on her for Cancer in February 1965. I have operated on one of her children later, and I knew Flora more at this time. Flora was a person of love. She was the beloved wife of her husband and the loving mother of her children. She shared the responsibilities of the home, of the Parish, of the Diocese and of the whole of the Church of South India.

She was a worthy partner in life to Ananda Rao Samuel, as the mother of his children, as the person who shared his emotions and the troubles in his responsibilities.

She endured much pain and disappointment regarding the troubles besetting her husband and yet she always had a smile and a tranquillity which was an index of her faith in God, and brought much comfort to Ananda Rao and to the children. She is now restored to the presence of our Heavenly Father and of His son Jesus Christ, in whom she believed and whom she loved completely.

Today is a significant day to the members of Flora's family, to her loved ones, to her friends and to those who knew her, that she is in the Heavenly Father's presence.

Today is the day when the fragrance of her memory

begins and will linger for a long while yet in the minds of those who knew her and loved her.

Today is also a day of significance; this is the day the spiritual leader of the Church of South India, the Moderator, Ananda Rao Samuel, has given to the Church, to the Christians of this country and all other countries, the sacrifice of his wife for upholding the message of goodness and preaching the love of Christ. Christ himself has spoken these words, 'There is no greater love than this, that a man should lay down his life', A part of Ananda Rao's life has been given, has been laid down.

Today is also a day of shame on us, Christians. Whether we belong to a particular group or not, whether we belong to a certain diocese or not, today is a day of shame when we recollect the thought that on the first day of this year some among us, Christians of India, conspired and attempted to destroy the spiritual leader of the Church and his family, and that a part of this attempt has succeeded. If the attempt to uphold what is clean and pure and upright, if the reaction to putting down corruption, to purge the ugly things in Christian life, particularly Christian Institutional life, is to be retaliated with assassination either with words or fire or knife, then the Christians of this country will be looked down upon with contempt by those who are critically watching the lives of the Christian Churches and of Christians, and we will be hardly witnesses of Christ.

I sincerely hope and pray that this day will also be a day of change, change of mind, of heart and of spirit, a day of seeking God's forgiveness, for our wickedness, for our imperfections and for our sins. If from this day onwards there is yet no change, then this sacrifice would be in vain. But if on this day of retrospection we determine to uphold the leaders of the Church and Church-related organisations, to consider them as servants chosen by God and to support them in prayer and in goodwill, with a constructive and helpful attitude, then from this day on new strength will flow to each one of us; we shall come closer to God and fulfil His purposes.

I will end this message by saying that we are all united together in expressing our love and sympathy to Ananda Rao Samuel and to his children and members of his family and that we are one with them in their moments of loneliness and sorrow.

Rend Your Hearts

It is our prayer that the sacrifice of Mrs. Flora Samuel, the wife of our Moderator the Most Rev. Ananda Rao Samuel will be the beginning of renewal not only within the life of the Krishna-Godavari Diocese but perhaps within the life of the whole Church. We must pledge ourselves to build anew the Church of God with healing, with reconciliation and with love. May we open our ears and allow God to speak to us through an innocent life given through suffering and pain to gain victory over the forces of evil.

Perhaps the cost has been heavy and the price beyond all human values. The Church, universal and local, should condemn such acts of violence and intolerance, descending to depths below human behaviour. Evil is seen at its worst and the men behind the whole plot must be commended to the forgiving love of the Heavenly Father. This whole episode is the result of disciplining those who were guilty of misappropriation of God's money. There is no doubt that they were guilty of the charges of corruption. This painful and unpleasant event should leave no bitterness or remorse in the Church but must lead the Church to penitence. It may well be the corporate sin of the Church for which we had to pay this heavy price.

Whither do we go from here? This month we begin the Lent Season on the 8th February, on Ash Wednesday, and the season of Lent ought to lead the entire Church to introspection and self-examination.

Whither has the Church been going?

1. Quite obviously from the recent incident, towards martyrdom. We thank God for this because the blood of the martyr is the seed of the Church.

2. Towards power and position. Perhaps it is very true that we have sinned. Everybody seems to hanker after power. Laymen want to be important, they want position, they want to assert their views, they want to be heard through loud speaking. As for Presbyters, we want to sit on committees, we want position, we want more power. We like to be seen and heard and perhaps we want to somehow make it and become a Bishop. Alas for Bishops, we want to cling on to power, we find it difficult to relinquish our office and give room to younger leadership. We sit on episcopal chairs ordering people about, sometimes trying to crush those who oppose us and working hard to head the CSI. One cannot but pray:

Lord have mercy on us
Christ have mercy on us

3. Towards legal courts—we need to hang our heads in shame when the household of God is unable to settle its disputes. The easiest way out, it is perhaps escapism, is to run to the legal pandit rather than to the Pastor or to the spiritual men of God. We want to have our disputes settled by Hindu lawyers and Hindu judges who do not know the exact set up of the Church and who sit in judgement over the Body of Christ. We can always have Commissions, Arbitration Boards and Church Panchayats to settle our disputes *in love*, not by law.

4. Towards a lack of spirituality—Perhaps one of the most important directions in which we are moving today is being engrossed in administration, and in fund-raising campaigns. These are certainly important but we must learn to set our priorities aright. The primary work of the Church should be spiritual renewal and missions. We must return to God and have our spiritual priorities as first and secondly must certainly maintain high standards of efficiency and honesty in administration, ministries and fund raising.

Perhaps the call to us in this Lent Season is in the prophetic words of Joel 'Rend your hearts and not your garments and turn unto the Lord your God'. May we give more emphasis to looking within our lives, to seeing our pride, our self-seeking love for power, our lack of love, our lack of spiritual discipline and may we turn to the Lord our God who is waiting for the Church to find itself in His love.

Let us remember that the Cross leads to the Resurrection. Good Friday is incomplete without Easter Morn. We mourn the loss of Mrs. Flora Samuel with sorrow and with thanksgiving, with tears and with joy, with doubt and with faith, with despair and with hope, with defeat and with victory. The ultimate note is not one of Good Friday but of the Resurrection.

SUNDAR CLARKE,
Bishop.

Report of the XVIth Synod of the Church of South India

253 delegates and 70 visitors were shocked and saddened when they received the news of the death of Mrs. Flora Samuel, after three hours of the inauguration of the Synod. The XVIth Synod of the Church of South India met at the C.M.S. College, Kottayam from 2 p.m. on Saturday 14th January till the evening of Wednesday the 18th January 1978. The sessions were adjourned as a mark of respect to Mrs. Samuel. A memorial service was held at 7-15 p.m. A delegation comprising the Rt. Rev. Sundar Clarke, the Rt. Rev. P. Solomon, Mrs. Joy Gnanadason and Mr. Paul Sudhakar and the entire group from the Krishna-Godavari Diocese, left Kottayam to attend the funeral in Madras. The Synod resolved to set up 'The Flora Samuel Memorial Endowment Fund', to which all the Dioceses and Diocesan Institutions were requested to contribute generously, and that the income from this fund be used for some good cause as decided by the Synod Executive Committee.

The three important events of the Synod were the refreshing and challenging address on the theme *In the Power of the Spirit* given by Dr. Emelio Castro, the Director of the Commission on World Mission and Evangelism of the World Council of Churches, the address of Mr. P. A. Sathiasatchy on the practical aspects of the main theme and the introduction, by Dr. M. Abel, of the report of the Special Committee appointed by the Church of South India Synod to study the life and work of the Church. The delegates discussed the report in the sessions. The Synod referred the report along with its recommendations from the sections to the dioceses for further study. It was hoped that the Special Committee would meet again and bring in recommendations to the Executive Committee.

The Rt. Rev. Ananda Rao Samuel was elected as Moderator, the Rt. Rev. Solomon Doraisawmy as the Deputy Moderator, Mrs. G. L. Gopal Ratnam as the General Secretary and Mr. P. I. Chandy as the Treasurer for the biennial 1978-1980.

The General Secretary reported the receipt of the required favourable votes from the dioceses affirming the amendment 'Bishop shall retire on completion of his 65th year.' The amendment 'Men and women will be ordained as Presbyters' in place of 'Men will be ordained' was defeated. Taking serious note of the fact that the resolution of the Synod of 1976—that men and women are equally eligible for the ordained ministry of the Church—cannot be implemented because the constitutional amendment has been declared as not accepted, the Synod resolved that the Dioceses undertake a fresh study of the role of the women in the ministry of the Church and particularly the question of the ordination of women, bearing in mind that in so doing we are participating in a concern of the worldwide ecumenical fellowship of the Churches.

The Synod resolved to continue indefinitely the present practice of receiving ministers from any church with which the Church of South India is in full communion. Other actions taken by the Synod were:

(a) The bifurcation of the Dornakal Diocese was unanimously agreed upon. The Diocesan Executive, in consultation with the Working Committee of the Synod, was asked to implement the scheme at an early period.

(b) The Madhya Kerala Diocese was asked to bring concrete proposals to the next Synod with regard to the scheme for bifurcation.

(c) Resolved to express our painful feeling to the Government for continuing its discrimination on the grounds of religion on matters like awarding scholarship and employment even to poor Christians and request the Government to remove this kind of discrimination as early as possible.

(d) The Synod resolved that, in future, the reports presented to the Synod by the Synod Officers and conveners of Standing Committees shall include a report on actions taken on the resolutions and recommendations passed at the previous Synod.

(e) Resolved to increase the diocesan assessment to the Synod from $\frac{3}{4}\%$ of its total earnings to 1%.

(f) Reaffirm the Church of South India's position that it shall not recognise any congregation outside its geographical boundaries. At the same time efforts are to be made for providing pastoral care where necessary.

A festival of evangelism led by Bishop Thangamuthu, was celebrated on the night of Monday the 16th. A special message was given by the Rev. Canon James S. Robertson of USPG, London. A tableau was presented by the Madhya Kerala Diocese to highlight the inauguration, growth and achievement of the Church of South India during the last three decades.

A special dinner was hosted to the delegates by Mr. K. M. Matthew on the night of Sunday the 15th January. A reception was arranged by the Madhya Kerala Diocese to the delegates on the evening of Tuesday the 17th January which was followed by dinner and an entertainment programme. At the reception, the District Collector released a special Souvenir brought out by the diocese. The Synod also released a Souvenir and a special issue of *Yuvalokam*, by the youth of Madhya Kerala Diocese, was also given to the delegates.

Daily Bible studies were conducted by Metropolitan Paulos Mar Gregorios during the Holy Communion Service. The members received with appreciation reports of 25 committees and those of the General Secretary and the Deputy Moderator. Recommendations arising out of these reports were deferred to the Executive Committee for further action.

GEORGE KOSHY,
ALEXANDER D. JOHN.

NOTICES

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**DR. AKBAR ABDUL-HAQQ NINTH ALL-INDIA
INSTITUTE ON EVANGELISM JUNE 5-11, 1978
KODAIKANAL, T. N., S. INDIA**

The Ninth All-India Institute on Evangelism will be conducted under the leadership of Dr. Akbar Abdul-Haqq, Associate Evangelist of Dr. Billy Graham. These six days of practical training and instruction on Evangelism in India today will benefit both Pastors and laymen. The theme for the week will be 'Life in Christ and Christian Witnessing'. Lectures from outstanding resource leaders from throughout India as well as Dr. Akbar Abdul-Haqq will constitute the daily programme in addition to Bible Study and Prayer groups. There will be a time of Christian worship and inspirational periods to hear from delegates from all over the country.

Pastors, lay persons, and youth are invited to apply for this Institute. Only those who have NEVER ATTENDED any of Dr. Haqq's former Institutes should apply as others desiring this opportunity will be con-

sidered. All sessions will be in English to conserve time, so those not understanding or speaking this language SHOULD NOT APPLY. Each delegate will be asked to provide 20% of their own travel to the Institute. Food and lodging will be provided during the week at Kodaikanal. Please send for an application blank to Dr. K. Devasahayam, Door No. 5-87-98, IIInd Line, Lakshmipuram, Guntur-522 002, A.P., S. India. Final date for applications will be May 1st, 1978 and only 150 delegates will be selected by Dr. Akbar Abdul-Haqq. Please be prompt in responding.

Yours in the Master's Service,

(Sd.) K. DEVASAHAYAM,
Associate Director for India

Guntur,
16-1-1978

News from the Dioceses

KARNATAKA NORTH

Week of Prayer for Christian Unity

As a part of the observance of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity we had a United Service in the Cathedral (Roman Catholic) at Bellary at 5-30 P.M. on 22-1-1978. Our Catholic counterparts greeted us and welcomed us to their Cathedral and all of us joined in a potential invocation and thanksgiving. The two lessons were read by a Presbyter and a Priest. The Rt. Rev. H. D. Luther Abraham, retired Bishop of the C.S.I., preached an inspiring sermon on Eph. 2:14. The Sermon was followed by a few moments of silent meditation and an affirmation of the Faith. An offertory of Rs. 88 was sent to the Cyclone Victims of Andhra Pradesh.

O. SIVARAMAIA.

TIRUNELVELI DIOCESE

Clergy Wives' Retreat

The annual Retreat for the wives of clergy in this diocese was held from 27th to 29th January 1978. Mrs. Elobai D. Abraham, Convener of the Retreat, had made the arrangements. Deaconess S. Elizabeth Paul of the Diocese of Madras gave 4 devotional talks on 'Breaking Down the Barriers'. The Rev. S. Jayapaul David, one of the presbyters of the diocese, conducted Bible study on 'Paul the pastor'. This Retreat was a time of prayer, fellowship and study.

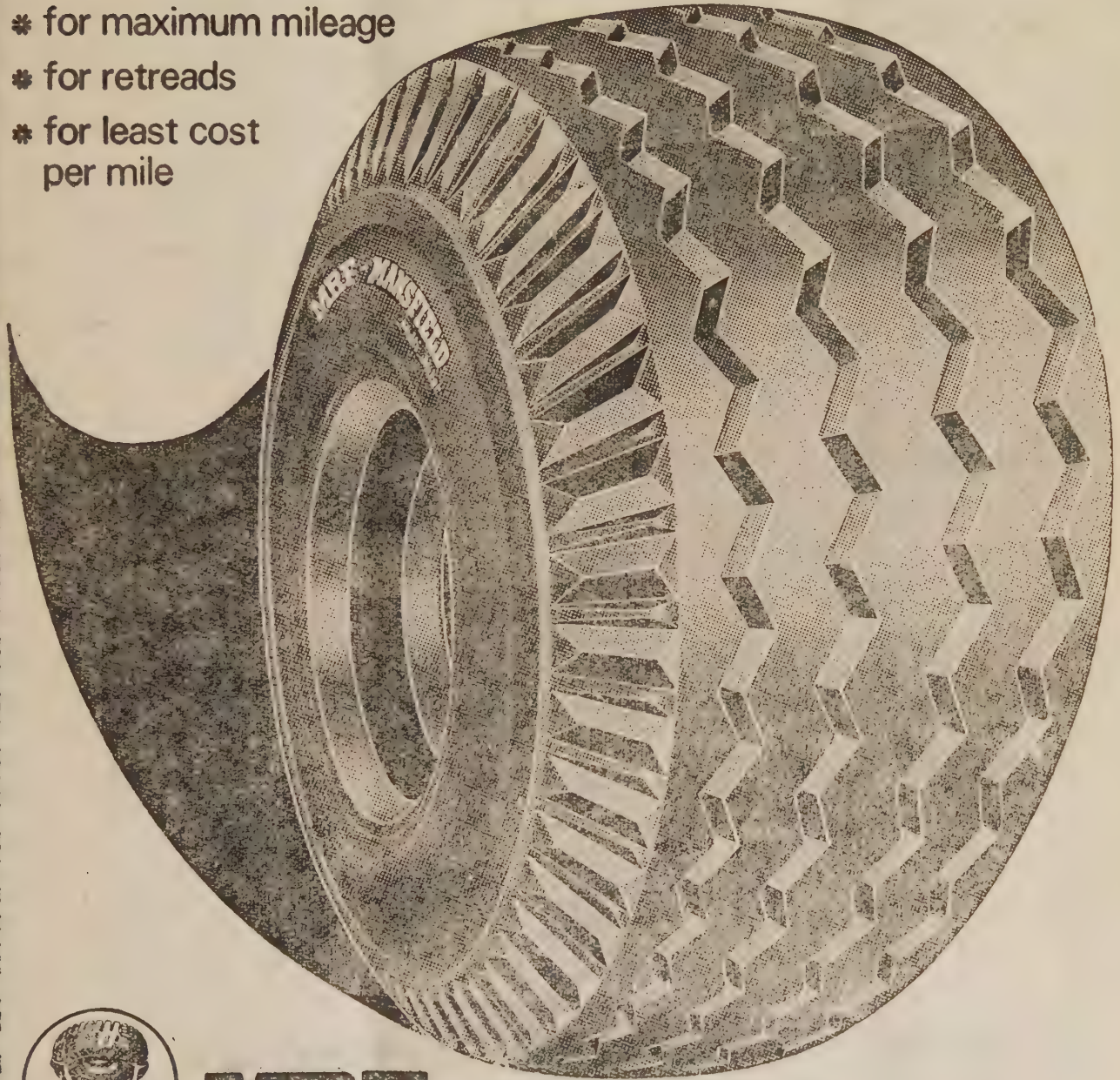
RUBY DURAISINGH.

[FEBRUARY 1978]

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Dates Set for Consultation on World Evangelization

'How Shall They Hear?' will be the theme when top evangelical leaders gather in January 12-26, 1980, in a follow-up to the 1974 International Congress on World Evangelization. The name of the meeting will be Consultation on World Evangelization.

A definite number of participants has not been determined but the conference is not expected to be on the scale of the 1974 Lausanne Congress. Instead, it is being planned as an opportunity for those at work in international evangelical leadership to assess the evangelistic situation and to plan strategy for the immediate future. Among those to be invited will be members of the Lausanne committee, their alternates and members of the working groups formed by the committee. Certain leaders of the 1974 Congress will be invited as well as some specialists.

The full committee endorsed a statement of purpose as follows :

'Accepting the nature, basis and framework of Christian mission as revealed in the Scriptures and interpreted in the Lausanne Covenant, and humbly

desiring to discern and obey the direction of the Holy Spirit, the Consultation will convene: (1) To seek fresh vision and power for the task Christ has given to His Church, until He comes; (2) to assess the state of world evangelization, its progress and hindrances; (3) to complete an extended study programme on theological and strategic issues related to world evangelization, already begun in many regions, and to share its results; (4) to develop specific evangelistic strategies related to different unreached peoples; (5) to review the mandate of the Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization and the role it might play in furthering these objectives.'

The theme from Romans 10:14: 'How Shall They Hear?' was seen by committee members as a logical next step from the 1974 congress theme, 'Let the Earth Hear His Voice.' Committee members saw the theme as a way of emphasizing that the 1980 meeting will go beyond the 1974 Congress and consider further implementation of the work of that gathering.

*World Evangelization News
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